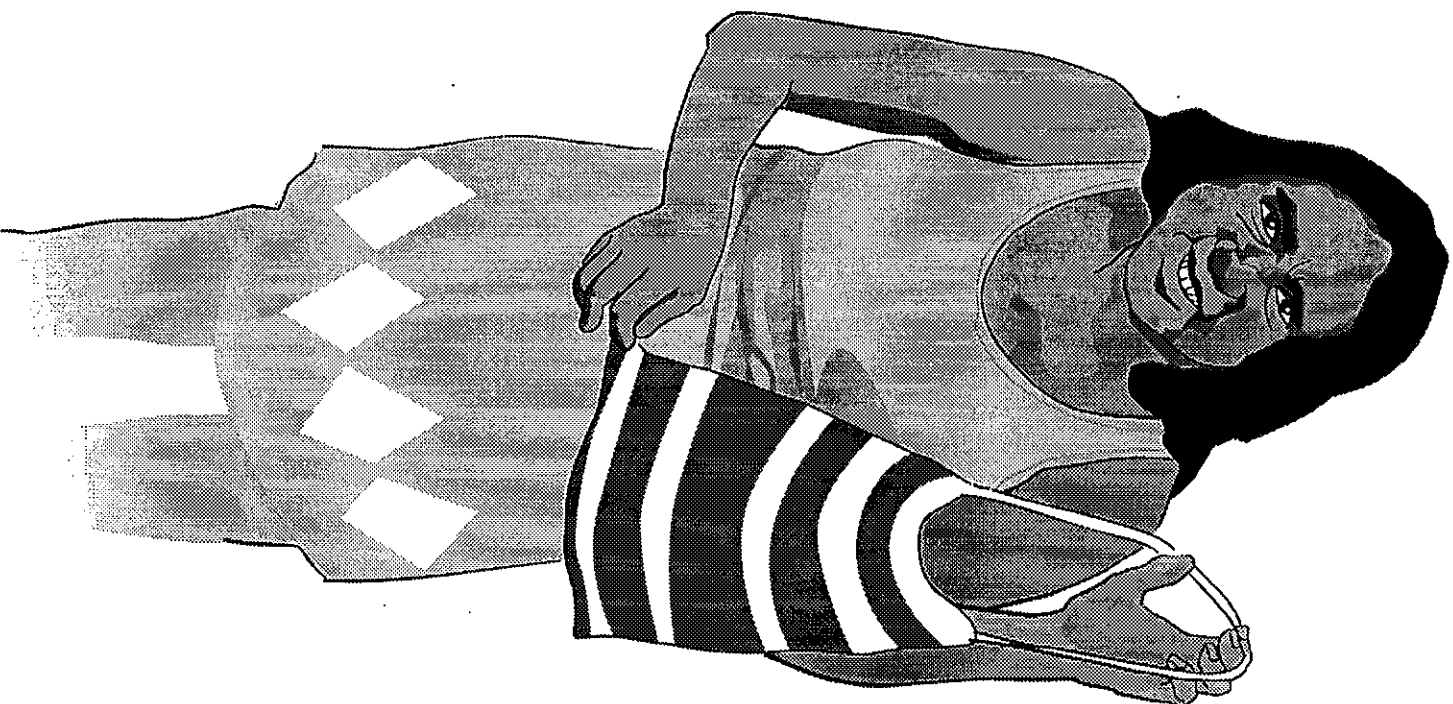


HOW WE USE PLANTS



Key Ideas

We can use plants in many different ways.
Sometimes only part of a plant is useful.
The usefulness of a plant depends on its structure and properties.

Work Requirements

Students will:

- draw on knowledge of local plants to develop a retrieval chart
- list the parts of plants that are useful
- discuss the various uses of local plants.

Teacher Preparation

Find pictures of plants from around the community and elsewhere.

Organise material for and draw up a retrieval chart.

Organise for an Aboriginal person from the community to talk to students about local plants and their uses.

Organise a tape recorder and cassette to record the community member talking to the students.

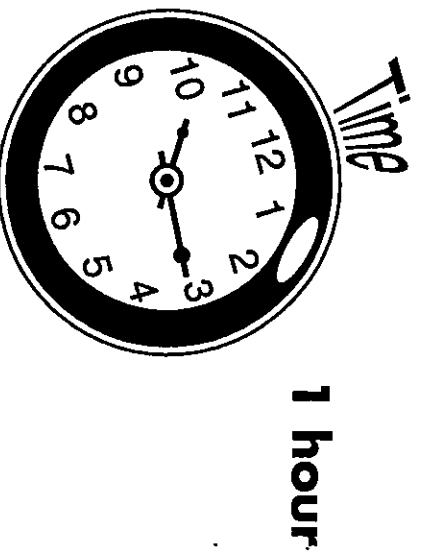
Prepare a large retrieval chart so that students can record information.

Materials

paper

pens, pencils

tape recorder and blank cassette



Student Tasks

FOCUS

Show pictures of plants found around the community and elsewhere.
What common name do we give for all these living things? [plants]
Brainstorm: What do you use plants for?
Teacher records ideas

INVESTIGATE

Class: Find out which local plants are commonly used in your community.
Find out what they are used for.
You may need to talk to an Aboriginal community member to help you with this.

PROCESS DATA

Class: Draw up a retrieval chart about local plants in your community and what they can be used for.

EVALUATE

Discussion: Have you used any of these plants before?
How have you used them?

Vocabulary

plants, uses
any words that come up on the retrieval chart

Language structures and functions

Present tense for description

Expressing ideas e.g.

_____ is used for _____
_____ is used to _____

Giving reasons

_____ use _____ because _____
_____ is used for _____ because _____

Word families: Plant

plantation, pot plant, planting, planter box, planter

Genres

Oral description of plants and uses.

Plants have special significance in Indigenous communities.
Talk with community members and teachers about the groups
that plants belong to.

In northern Australia, the plants are divided into moieties,
Dhuwa and Yirritja. Talk with community members to
determine if it is OK to record the moieties of the plants.

CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS • • • • •

Retrieval Chart Example for Desert Areas

What the Plant is used for

Plant & Part used	Food	Medicine	Tools	Shelter	Basket/ Coolamon
River Red Gum Bark, flowers, branches, budscap, stem leaves, grub.	Flowers are soaked in water to make sweet drink. Grub is good food from the tree.	Bark ashes are mixed with tobacco which they put into their mouth. Bark is also used as medicine.	Budcaps are made into necklace. Stems are made into toy catapult. And barks are used as toy boomerang.	Red river gum tree gives good shade in the dry weather.	Bark is used to make coolamon.
Desert Bloodwood Tree Fruit, lerp scales, trunk, timber, gum.	Fruit is like a coconut with rough exterior, lerp scales is eaten, honey from this tree is found too.	Gum is used as a medicine for common diseases.	Trunk is used to make wooden bowls, timber is used as firewood.	This tree gives good shade.	Timber is used to make wooden bowls.
Desert Kurraiong Tree Seeds, light wood, timber.	Seeds are nutritious food. Normally, the seeds are collected burnt and then the hair removed.		Light woods are used to make shield but it does have a tendency to split.	Gives good shade in the dry weather.	Timbers are used for carrying coolamons to carry babies with, when they are asleep and the mothers carry them everywhere.
Sandal-wood Tree Inner bark, leaves & fruit.	The fruit maybe eaten raw when it is ripe.	The inner bark is used to treat sore throat, flu, boil, sore eye. Leaves are used to smoke the new born babies when they are born.			
Mulga Trunk, fruit branches & seeds.	Mulga apple is a marble-shaped fruit. Seeds are ground and roasted.				

Retrieval Chart Example for Top End

What the Plant is used for

Plant & Part used	Food	Medicine	Tools	Shelter	Basket
Fan Palm Inner tip cabbage, stems, leaves.	Inner tip cabbage may be eaten and it's quite tasty.	Crushed stem cores may be applied directly to pain in the back.	The inner cabbage leaves are used to produce purple and green fibres.		Leaves are used to make fibres for basket and dillybag making.
Pandanus Palm Leaf base, seeds, leaves, trunk, root.	Eat the base it is eaten raw.	Chew leaves to relieve pain on mouth, tongue and sore throat. Leaves used as mosquito repellent. Root is used externally to treat scabies.	Didgeridoo, raft.		Leaves are used to make woven mats, baskets, and hats, etc.
Soap Tree Leaves, bark, roots.	Flowers are good source of nectar for the native bees for honey.	Leaves used for ringworms, sores, upset tummy, pain in the body, headache.	Branches are used for wrapping and roasting meat. Leaves for fish poisoning. Timber is used for woomeras.		
Sandpaper Fig Tree Inner bark, fruit, stems, leaves.	The fruit is eaten ripe when it dark brown.	Scrap the inner bark and boil in water, the liquid is used to treat diarrhoea.	Leaf used as sand paper to rub spears, young stems used as firesticks.		
Stringybark Tree Bark, leaves, twigs or branch.		Inner bark is used to treat sore lips and painful red tongue.	Barks are used for paintings. Sticks are used for spears and dancing.	Leaves are put on top of the bough shelter. Twigs are used for firewood.	